

ASSEMBLY OF THE WORD

RESTRICTIONS ON PLACES OF WORSHIP DURING COVID-19

- Places of worship must use the Victorian Government QR Code Service to check-in attendees.
- Places of worship must display QR Code posters at each public entrance to the premises (both indoor and outdoor).
- Wearing a mask is required for everyone aged 8 and above in all indoor settings in Victoria (unless an exception applies, such as when in a home, when consuming food or drink).
- Vaccination check-in requirements do not apply to people attending places of worship. However, it is strongly recommended that people are fully vaccinated.
- Quotient requirements no longer apply.
- Allow a reasonable time between events to allow for cleaning between each service.
- Cleaning by wiping with disinfectant:
 - Frequently touched surfaces (at least twice/day).
 - Whenever a surface is visibly soiled.
- Holy water fonts are to be emptied or removed.
- At the Sign of Peace, the practice of shaking hands has ceased. During this time the congregation will be asked to pray for peace.
- The distribution of Holy Communion will be in the hand only and not on the tongue. There will be no distribution of the chalice.
- All ministers of Holy Communion (both ordinary and extraordinary) are to use hand sanitiser before the distribution of Holy Communion commences and are not to physically touch anyone in the act of blessing.

Updates are available from <https://www.coronavirus.vic.gov.au/covidsafe-religion-and-ceremonies-guidance>

ASH WEDNESDAY – YEAR C 2022

Prior to the Liturgy, two small bowls containing ashes are prepared. Normally, the ashes are made by burning the palms left from the previous Ash Wednesday. If this is not possible, ashes should be prepared from the burning of wood or other vegetation. The ashes are blessed during the Liturgy. There is no Communion given during this Liturgy.

NOTE ON ASH WEDNESDAY Distribution of Ashes in Time of Pandemic

The Priest says the prayer for blessing the ashes. He sprinkles the ashes with holy water, without saying anything. Then he addresses all those present and only once says the formula as it appears in the Roman Missal, applying it to all in general: “Repent, and believe in the Gospel”, or “Remember that you are dust, and to dust you shall return”.

The Priest then cleanses his hands, puts on a face mask and distributes the ashes to those who come to him or, if appropriate, he goes to those who are standing in their places. The Priest takes the ashes and sprinkles them on the head of each one without saying anything.

From the Congregation for Divine Worship and the Discipline of the Sacraments, 12 January 2021.

Robert Card. Sarah, *Prefect*

✠ Arthur Rochem, *Archbishop Secretary*

***This will be adapted for Assembly of the Word
(see blessing and giving of ashes below)***

INTRODUCTORY RITES

GATHERING HYMN

Stand

Quiet music is played while people assemble. The Leaders move to the front when the Assembly is to begin.

WELCOME

Leader 1: Let us commence our prayer on this solemn day with the words of Scripture.

All: Lord, you are merciful to all, and hate nothing you have created.
You overlook the sins of your people to call them to repentance.
You are the Lord our God.

Wisdom 11:24-25,27.

GREETING

All make the sign of the cross.

Leader 2: In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit.

All: Amen.

Leader 2: Blessed be Jesus Christ,
who has shown the greatness of his love,
by dying for us while we were still sinners.
Bless the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit.

All: Blessed be God forever.

Leader 2: Today, we, the Catholic community of
gather to hear the Word, and commence the time of
repentance and conversion, which the Church calls us to
through this celebration of Ash Wednesday and the time of Lent.
We gather in unity with the Church throughout the world
and with our sisters and brothers in all our parish communities,
who are also gathering in the Lenten spirit.

PENITENTIAL RITE

Leader 1: Let us acknowledge our sins,
and so prepare ourselves to celebrate the sacred mysteries.
Lord, have mercy.

All: Lord, have mercy.

Leader 1: You heal the wounds of our sin and division:
Christ, have mercy.

All: Christ, have mercy.

Leader 1: You intercede for us with the Father:
Lord, have mercy.

All: Lord, have mercy.

Leader 1: May almighty God have mercy on us,
forgive us our sins,
and bring us to everlasting life.

All: Amen.

OPENING PRAYER

Leader 2: Let us pray.

Brief pause for silent prayer.

Grant, O Lord, that we may begin with holy fasting
this campaign of Christian service,
so that, as we take up battle against spiritual evils,
we may be armed with weapons of self-restraint.
Through our Lord Jesus Christ, your Son,
who lives and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit,
one God, for ever and ever.

All: Amen.

LITURGY OF THE WORD

FIRST READING: Joel 2:12-18 *Sit*

A period of silence, about one or two minutes, is recommended at the conclusion of each reading.

RESPONSORIAL PSALM: Psalm 50

Response: Be merciful, O Lord, for we have sinned.

SECOND READING: 2 Corinthians 5:20-6:2

GOSPEL ACCLAMATION: Praise to you, Lord Jesus Christ, *Stand*
King of endless glory!
If today you hear his voice, harden not your hearts.
Praise to you, Lord Jesus Christ,
King of endless glory!

GOSPEL: Matthew 6:1-6, 16-18

One of the Leaders goes to the lectern.

Leader: The Lord be with you.

All: And also with you.

Leader: A reading from the Holy Gospel according to Matthew.

The Leader makes the sign of the cross on the book, then on forehead, lips and breast.

All: Glory to you, O Lord.

At the end of the Gospel:

Leader: The Gospel of the Lord.

All: Praise to you, Lord Jesus Christ.

SHARED REFLECTION

Sit

- *A shared reflection explaining the meaning which these readings had for their original hearers, and indicating how these readings apply to this particular community, should now be given.*
- *The shared reflection may be led by one of the Leaders or another person from the Assembly.*
- *The reflection must be prepared beforehand and should be a sharing of what the scripture is saying to us today, rather than a 'sermon type' presentation.*
- *The reflection should only be of 3-5 minutes duration.*

** If this is not done, the following should be said:*

Leader: Let us now reflect in silence on the words of the Gospel and take them to our hearts.

After a brief time, the Blessing and Distribution of Ashes commences.

BLESSING AND DISTRIBUTION OF ASHES

Distribution of Ashes in Time of Pandemic – adapted for Assembly of the Word

The leader says the prayer for blessing the ashes. The ashes are sprinkled with holy water, without saying anything. The leader address all those present and only once says the formula, "Turn away from sin and be faithful to the Gospel."

The leader then cleanses their hands with sanitiser, puts on a face mask and distributes the ashes to those who come to them or, if appropriate, the leader goes to those who are standing in their places. The leader takes the ashes and sprinkles them on the head of each one without saying anything.

The Liturgical Commission offers an alternative suggestion. The distribution of ashes could proceed with the use of an individual cotton bud dipped in the ashes and signed on the forehead of each person present, without saying anything, ensuring the process is contactless.

Three people would be required for the distribution of ashes – the leader distributing the ashes, one person with a bowl to provide the leader with a new cotton bud for each person and one person with a larger bowl to collect the used cotton buds. The leader would be the only person touching the cotton bud. The leader cleanses her/his hands, puts on a face mask (gloves are optional) and distributes the ashes to those who come to them or, if appropriate, the leader goes to those who are standing in their places.

Leader 1: Dear friends in Christ,
let us implore God our Father
to renew us in spirit
as these ashes are placed on our heads
as a sign of repentance.

Brief pause for silent prayer.

Lord God,
you are moved by humility
and grant pardon to those who repent.
Listen to our prayers
and pour out your blessing
on those who are marked by these ashes,
that, observing the season of Lent,
they may come with hearts made clean
to celebrate the paschal mystery of your Son.
We ask this through Christ our Lord.

All: Amen.

PRAYERS OF THE FAITHFUL

Stand

*The people are invited to pray; after the Prayers of the Faithful, the concluding prayer is said. It is desirable that the individual prayers be given by someone **other** than the Leader.*

Invitation to Prayer:

Leader 2: My sisters and brothers,
we should pray at all times,
but especially during this season of Lent:
We should keep watch with Christ
and pray to our Father.

Prayers of the Faithful for Lent can be found in the Appendices of the Altar Missal. It is recommended that a petition for vocations to the Priesthood and Religious Life be included in the prayers and a petition for the Plenary Council.

- **Prayer for the Synod of Bishops “For a Synodal Church: Communion, Participation and Mission”:** We pray that the Synod of Bishops journey encourages people to speak with courage integrating freedom, truth, and love.
- **Prayer for “Amoris Laetitia” Year of the Family:** Lord, grant that each family might live their specific vocation to holiness in the Church as a call to become missionary disciples, in the service of life and peace.
- **Praying with Pope Francis:** Each month Pope Francis puts forward a prayer intention and asks Catholics around the world to join him in prayer. These intentions cover all sorts of areas of life encouraging faith, renewing hope and calling us to loving service.

March intention for evangelisation – for a Christian response to bioethical challenges: We pray for Christians facing new bioethical challenges. May they continue to defend the dignity of all human life with prayer and action.

April - for health care workers: We pray for health care workers who serve the sick and the elderly, especially in the poorest countries. May they be adequately supported by governments and local communities.

Concluding Prayer:

Leader 2: Father,
 hear the prayers of your people.
 Give us what you have inspired us
 to ask you for in faith.
 We ask this through Christ our Lord.

All: Amen.

RITE OF THANKSGIVING

Leader 1: On this day we acknowledge our need for repentance
 and our desire to live this Lent well.
 We also realise that God is always with us in our daily lives
 and for this we should always give thanks.
 Let us now stand and offer our praise and thanks to God.

Blessed are you, God and Father:
Your patience is untiring,
and your love is without fault;
you offer us favourable times,
and give us days of salvation.
Great are you, O Lord our God.

All: Blessed are you, O God, now and for all ages.

Leader 2: Blessed are you, Jesus Christ, Son of the living God:
 You are faithful even to the cross;
 you welcome the repentant with kindness
 and pardon their sins.
 Holy are you, Lord Jesus Christ.

All: Blessed are you, O God, now and for all ages.

Leader 1: Blessed are you, Holy Spirit,
 the love who remove all fear from our hearts:
 You strengthen us in temptation
 and give new life.
 Strong are you, O Spirit of the Lord.

All: Blessed are you, O God, now and for all ages.

Leader 2: Great are you, O God;
Holy are you, O God;
strong are you, O God,
now and for all ages.

All: Blessed are you, O God, now and for all ages.

THE LORD'S PRAYER

Leader 1: Jesus invites us to call on his Father's name:
Filled with trust in Jesus' power,
we conclude our prayer of praise in his own words:

All: Our Father, who art in heaven,
hallowed be thy name;
thy kingdom come, thy will be done
on earth as it is in heaven.
Give us this day our daily bread;
and forgive us our trespasses
as we forgive those who trespass against us;
and lead us not into temptation,
but deliver us from evil.

For the kingdom, the power, and the glory are yours,
now and forever. Amen.

PRAYER FOR PEACE

Leader 2: Remembering that Jesus is in our midst as we are assembled here,
let us pray for unity and reconciliation.

Brief pause for silent prayer.

Leader 2: Lord, may your healing love,
which is present in this community,
turn us from sin
and keep us on the way that leads to you.
We ask this in the name of Jesus the Lord.

All: Amen.

CONCLUDING RITE

GREETING

Leader 1: The Lord be with you.

All: And also with you.

BLESSING

All make the sign of the cross together:

Leader 1: May the Father bless us,
for he has adopted us as his children.

All: Amen.

Leader 1: May the Son come to help us,
for he has received us as brothers and sisters.

All: Amen.

Leader 1: May the Spirit be with us,
for he has made us his dwelling place.

All: Amen.

Leader 1: And may almighty God bless you all,
the Father, and the Son, ✠ and the Holy Spirit.

All: Amen.

DISMISSAL

Leader 2: Let us go forth in peace, to spend this time of Lent worthily
that we might love and serve the Lord always.

All: Thanks be to God.

The Leaders bow to the altar and return to their places in the Assembly.

Acknowledgements:

Material for the Introductory Rites, Opening and Communion Prayers, Profession of Faith and the Praise Prayer have been taken from or adapted from Sunday Celebration of the Word and Hours, Catholic Conference of Canadian Bishops © Concacan Inc., 1995 and LiturgyHelp www.liturgyhelp.com. All rights reserved. This material is used with permission for the purposes of Sunday Assemblies of Word and Communion in the Catholic Diocese of Ballarat, Victoria, Australia only.

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